

# Suffragists Are Sending Full Hospital Unit

Strictly Feminine War Aid Wholly "Manned" and Financed by Women and Fifty Beds Will Be Maintained in France at a Cost of \$125,000 Yearly Raised by Them

By ELEANOR BOOTH SIMMONS.

THE first strictly feminine hospital unit, the one under the direction of Dr. Caroline Finley of New York, is about to leave this country for France and it goes with the financial backing of the suffragists. Various organizations are showing their interest in the undertaking. The Colony Club is donating a motor truck, Sorosis and other women's clubs are contributing help; but it is the National Woman Suffrage Association that has pledged itself to raise the annual \$125,000 which it is estimated will be required for the upkeep of the unit.

And they aren't even asking that the word "suffrage" be included in its name. "The Women's Foreign Service Hospital of the U. S. A." it is to be called, and by its deeds our allies may know the type of women who form it and are behind it.

Dr. Finley is in France and it was in response to her urgent message that arrangements have been made to sail the middle of this month. "Great need for unit," she cabled. "Civilians sent many miles for treatment. Must do much surgery, need specialists, several dispensaries, ambulance. Bring six doctors, twelve nurses, eighteen aids, an aurist, a dentist; and do not forget the mechanicians."

A fifty bed hospital is to be established at Guiscard in the Department of the Aisne, about ten miles back from the junction of the French and British forces. There are three buildings and a walled garden, which latter a trained agriculturist will endeavor to make productive.

The wounded of the shelled towns will have first claim for attention, but all sorts of civilian cases, including obstetrical, will be received. The French Government waits to welcome the unit, the Red Cross has furnished the equipment and by St. Valentine's Day probably the entire staff—twelve physicians, twenty-one nurses, three clerks, a dietician-housekeeper and her assistant, a seamstress, six chauffeurs, a plumber, a mechanic, a pharmacist, a laboratory technician, an X-ray technician and a number of nurses' aids—will be braving the submarines. And every member of that staff, including the highly efficient plumber, is a woman.

In contrast to the advice Henry A. Wise Wood of the Aero Club gave the anti-suffragists the other day—he told them to drop their knitting and do less war work till they had rid the country of woman suffrage—the suffs are doing war

work with one hand and pushing the Federal amendment with the other.

For the moment the pushing is not done in the open. With that discretion learned in a forty years campaign at Washington, the suffs have retired to the offing, apparently, while the battle of the Titans for war control rages in the Senate.

But they are there on the job. Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt admitted in a letter to Rose Young of the Leslie Suffrage Foundation the other day that she is homesick for the flat she shares with Mary Garrett Hay and her desk in national headquarters on Madison avenue, but she won't leave Washington till the amendment passes.

Mrs. Catt writes that even the Southern Senators who suffer from what Mrs. Guilford Dudley of Tennessee calls "the States' rights ha'nt" admit in moments of expansion that they hope the woman suffrage amendment wins out. They can't bring themselves to vote for it, but they would like to see it out of the way; and Mrs. Catt insists that they see the justice of it.

The suffs, as they wait for the smoke of the Baker-Chamberlain battle to clear, are measuring and lining up their forces. In two new Western men just appointed to fill vacancies, Nugent of Idaho and Henderson of Nevada, they have warm friends, but of course that was to be expected in suffrage States. Senator Hollis of New Hampshire, a suff wheelhorse, is unfortunately absent on business and they won't have his vote, but he may pair.

The great question just now is, how will Senator James W. Wadsworth, Jr., of New York decide to vote? Will he, even for the sake of his wife, who is president of the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage—will he defy the Legislature of his State, which last week by a vote of eighteen to eight in the upper house and of seventy-two to seventeen in the lower house petitioned the Senators from New York to vote yes on the Susan B. Anthony amendment? Of course that word "Senators" in the Meyer resolution is just camouflage for Wadsworth, for Calder is hand in hand with the suffs, and well Wadsworth knows that the resolution is aimed at him.

The Meyer resolution must be a bit discouraging to the antis, just when they are fixing to get a bill introduced at Albany providing for the resubmission of the suffrage issue to the voters of New York. They are serenely confident that with

women added to the electorate woman suffrage would lose.

From their point of view women could be trusted to vote right on that question, though on nothing else. But how can they get their bill through a Legislature and past a Governor roped, thrown and tied by the suffs?

No, it is plain that the antis must change Albany and that is what they set out to do at their Biltmore meeting last week. Minnie Bronson fired the first gun by nominating Senator Wadsworth for our next Governor. Fight fire with fire, she says; fight votes with votes. Repugnant as the weapon is they must compel themselves to use it in the noble cause of anti-suffrage.

One Assemblyman they must get rid of is William C. Amos of the Eleventh district, Manhattan. A confiding feminine constituent of his named Mrs. Benjamin W. Wells wrote to ask him to do what he could to relieve the women of New York from the ballot which female agitators had imposed on them. Mr. Amos in a fatherly letter full of good suffrage advice—Mrs. Wells couldn't have known when she appealed to him that he marched with the Martyr Squad in the first suffrage parade and has ever been a shining light in the Men's League for Woman Suffrage—well, Mr. Amos adjured Mrs. Wells to adjust herself to an inevitable reform; and then he cruelly sent the whole correspondence to Big Boss Mary Garrett Hay of the City Suffrage party!

The education of the woman voter is proceeding strenuously through the efforts of the New York city Woman Suffrage party in spite of an acute shortage of wood and coal at headquarters, 3 East Thirty-eighth street. Big Boss Hay is trying to aid Mr. Garfield by shutting off the furnace and making the fireplaces do, and being too patriotic to push their claims at the fuel yards, the members were so hard put to it last week that they had to burn the big yellow ballot boxes they carried in the parade last November.

It is not unusual to see House Mother Mabel Russell or Press Agent Haskell dart out into the street and grab a stray wooden box or bit of lumber, take it down to the basement and chop it up. But in the face of all these difficulties the classes of women eager to learn the science of government grow larger and larger.

Prof. Howard Lee McBain of Columbia winds up his course of lectures to the suffs this week. The last one, on Thursday afternoon and evening, will discuss

the voter in relation to the cost of living and will deal with the tariff, distribution, price regulation, markets and terminals, taxation and Government expenditures, &c. Next week and for some weeks thereafter the regular Thursday classes will be conducted by two women. Miss Gracia Goller, former teacher of civics in the city schools, will give the evening lectures and Miss Louise Grant the afternoon course. There will be a slight charge for the afternoon lessons, on the theory that women who can come out afterwards must be of the leisure moneyed classes. Evenings are free.

Meanwhile the gospel is being carried abroad over the city. District leaders who listened to Prof. McBain are repeating his instructions in their districts. At settlements, mothers' clubs, suff headquarters, church houses, in every sort of place, women are feverishly learning how to vote. The College Settlement will have classes Wednesdays, the St. Bartholomew Girls' Club Mondays, the Fifth street Y. W. C. A. Thursdays, and so on.

So it begins to look as if women will know how to go through the ordeal without disgracing themselves in the special elections in the Seventh, Eighth, Twenty-first and Twenty-second districts next month. In the Seventh a Representative is to be elected to succeed John J. Fitzgerald; in the Eighth one to succeed Daniel J. Griffen; in the Twenty-first one to succeed Murray Hulbert; in the Twenty-second one to succeed Henry Bruckner. It would be very interesting if one could point to a woman candidate in these coming elections—interesting, but not true. The women are just lying back and observing and going slow in the wisest and most disappointing way.

Speaking of office, there is a well defined movement on foot to make Miss Mary Garrett Hay president of the Women's City Club. If that can be done perhaps the club will speed up on the lady-like gait it has so far maintained and become a real force in civic affairs.

When Mrs. Norman de R. Whitehouse, Mrs. Ogden Mills Reid, Mrs. Henry Wise Miller and that group of suffs organized it over two years ago they meant it to be the vehicle of the woman voter. That was just before the 1915 debacle, and the suffs had to abandon the Women's City Club to its fate while they kept on working for suffrage. Now we've got the vote, and with Big Boss Hay at the helm the club would have a chance to be a real vital force for good.

## Suffrage Gets Impetus in France Despite the War

THE French Union for Woman Suffrage resumed activity recently and it has acquired new supporters in the intellectual classes. There are, indeed, signs in France that the elevation of women to an equal political stature with men is emerging from the realm of theory.

When will women have the vote in France? Under what conditions? Why cannot the project be brought immediately before the Chamber of Deputies? These are questions that were discussed in a suffrage meeting in Paris not long ago.

Mme. de Witt-Schlumberger, the French Mrs. Norman de R. Whitehouse, arranged the gathering, which was addressed by M. Barthelemy, professor of law at the University of Paris, and by M. Flandin, Deputy from Yonne. The arguments used in their speeches are fairly illustrative of the present status of woman suffrage in France. If they seem to Americans somewhat complacent and patronizing, they are nevertheless the expression of the existing relative conditions in France.

M. Barthelemy says there isn't the shadow of a reason why woman should not enjoy universal suffrage in France. True, he sadly agrees, she is intellectually inferior to man; but this is due largely to the kind of education given her. It is a fact that the boy is taken up by the schools and prepared for a large, useful experience in practical life, while a girl's training is superficial and aims at the "arts d'agrément," so that her mind is gradually turned toward a sexual conception of her being and purpose. This is the city.

In rural communities, where coeducation is the practice, the two sexes receive similar training. Intimate contact with French provincial life would indicate that the peasant woman gets more out of her schooling than the man. She is much more practical and often bears alone the burdens that two should share alike.

It is generally the wife who has the quality of foresight and spurs the husband on to activity in fields where he might never have dreamed of directing his efforts. She is the treasurer and the accountant of the household. She holds the strings of the famous "bas de laine" (woollen stocking), and assumes the greater share of responsibility in the conjugal attempt to make the proverbial two ends meet.

The speaker also makes the point, which an unwitting foreigner is easily prone to concede, that from the point of view of morality woman's superiority is unquestioned. He says that in France the ratio of feminine criminality to male is one to twenty.

Alas! he laments, there is no real genius in woman, no divine flash of spiritual endowment that makes of a mere man a poet, an artist, a high priest of the muses.

The shades of Marie de France, of Christine de Pisan, of Marguerite de Navarre, of Mme. de la Fayette, Mme. de Maintenon, of Seudery, of Sevigne, of Stael and Sand, all arise in vain protest. But the learned professor of law soothes the woman lawyers of France with the admission that genius is the exception, not the rule. Hence the common lot of the mass of men is to be without genius, even as women are without it.

He ends his discourse with a summary of the good accomplished by woman suffrage in the Scandinavian and Australian countries, where it has been adopted. Of course he mentions improvements in public hygiene, in conditions of asylums, in the statistics regarding inebriety, and in infant mortality. He sums up with an appeal for the granting of the suffrage to woman and a statement that the time has come to go out and claim it.

Strangely enough he does not mention in an emphatic way the tremendous part woman has played in the war. Would it weaken the argument to repeat the oft repeated statement: without woman this war could not proceed?

Deputy Flandin gave a historical sketch of the uneven course of the woman suffrage movement in France. As early as 1906 a law was sketched and submitted for consideration in the Chamber to grant women the vote in all municipal campaigns. The idea was tenderly pigeon-holed.

Then in 1910 Ferdinand Buisson, one of the foremost educators of France and a recent visitor to America, argued in the Chamber for universal and integral woman suffrage and submitted a preliminary project by which women of twenty-one were to obtain the vote in municipal matters. This project was also delicately laid away; but some months later the question was forced into discussion and the proposition amended so that women were to acquire the vote at the age of thirty.

Arguments in favor of the change were naturally that the exercise of suffrage required a maturity of mind and a stability of character that few women below thirty

could possess. This project was again sealed in lavender and but for the war might again have burst out of its hiding place, only to be automatically returned to it.

The war, however, has definitely settled all questions in the minds of Frenchmen concerning woman's ability to bear her share of the political burden of a state. It is M. Flandin's belief that the feeling in the Chamber of Deputies is favorable to adopting some form of harmless suffrage for women. There is nothing in the way except the natural male tendency toward procrastination—ask John Bull about this—in political matters pertaining to the other sex.

Still, in France the situation is peculiarly complicated by an inherited racial point of view. It is likely therefore that France will wait till long after the war before imposing upon her fairer half the civic obligations of a democracy. Any present agitation of the question must be regarded as academic.

The meeting of the Union Francaise pour le Suffrage des Femmes ended with a great show of enthusiasm when Mme. de Witt-Schlumberger quoted a text chosen from President Wilson's welcome to the New York suffragists. It is given here as she read it, just to show Americans how their President sounds in French:

"La question du suffrage des femmes est une des questions fondamentales qui exigent une solution. Je parle non seulement au nom d'un grand parti, en soutenant le suffrage des femmes. Je tiens à parler aussi en mon nom personnel et à dire que le moment me semble venu pour les Etats-Unis de prendre cette détermination."